

Riro, Rapu and Rapanui: Refoundations in Easter Island Colonial History

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Rapanui is the world's most remote continuously inhabited place and this isolation enclosed its remarkable prehistory and shaped its tragic chronicle of relations with the outside world. In 1862, Rapanui began its incorporation into a world system of labor and trade, culminating in the alteration of the local order with the assassination of king Riro in 1899. For over half a century, the island was cut off socially from the rest of the world, until 1965 when a modern Rapanui hero pushed it back into the position it occupies today. King Riro and Alfonso Rapu are compared for their sources of leadership and the effects they had, the consequences for local knowledge of colonial space and time are explored.

Introduction

Rapanui, as the people of Easter Island call themselves and their place, is known for two main characteristics. Firstly, and more broadly, the grandeur and popular mystery of its *moai*, monolithic figures of colossal proportions that seem to dominate the physical as well as the cultural landscape of the island. Most photographs and other representations of Rapanui show these commemorative figures, set alone in a barren, unpopulated landscape.⁽²⁾ When I tell people that I do social anthropological research on Rapanui, most evince surprise that there are any people there at all!

The second feature of Rapanui's fame is that it is the most remote, continuously inhabited place on earth, with 3600 kilometers between it and the Chilean port of Caldera and around 3500 kilometers to the Polynesian capital of Papeete, its nearest inhabited neighbor being the nearly deserted island of Pitcairn, some 1500 kilometers distant.⁽³⁾ In one phrase, it is "the most island of islands."

Rapanui's distance from the rest of the world produced a remarkable indigenous culture over the two thousand years that people have lived there, the first thousand being the construction of those dramatic monuments, with much of the last thousand dedicated to their destruction (see McCall 1979).

Europeans came upon Rapanui on Easter Sunday 1722 and so named it in outsider languages, that arrival commencing a string of over a hundred European visits over the next 140 years (McCall 1990) culminating in overwhelming slave raids that drove the population to its all time low of 110 persons in 1877 (*ibid.* 1976).

Until the arrival of the slavers, the consciousness of the Rapanui dwelled on their island. This is not to say that in the past they did not have contacts with the rest of the world, perhaps before the onset of the Little Ice Age that so diminished Polynesian navigation. Rapanui might have been an entrepot between South America and the rest of Polynesia during earlier times, but that is for future discovery.⁽⁴⁾

When people began to ask the Rapanui about their past, they had not one, but two foundation myths. One myth, the more conventional understanding, had a single foundation by

the culture hero, Hotu Matu'a, who provided in proper poetic, the layout of the realm and why it should be so. Another, at this time, minor tradition, cognate with similar "two stratum" foundation tales elsewhere in Polynesia, had an unknown original population, followed by the Hotu Matu'a entourage (Heyerdahl 1989). For the purposes of this paper, it is not important whether there were two ancient foundations or one: I shall refer to it/them as the indigenous, if not to say autochthonous myth that grows out of Rapanui conceptions, for that population to understand itself on its own terms.

After the coming of resident Europeans, as missionaries and commercial exploiters, there followed two more refoundations, which I will represent by two historical figures, Simeon Riro, also known as Simeon 'a Kainga and Riro Roko-roko he Tau, and Alfonso Rapu Haoa. I use their conflicts with external authorities, Chilean in both cases, to symbolize, respectively, the French and the Chilean refoundations of Rapanui society and culture.

Following Alain Babadzan's (1982) proposition about multiple refoundations for Pacific islands territories, I propose, within a theoretical examination of colonialism, that Rapanui was founded three times. The first time was in the mythological past, as discussed above. The second time was in the decades 1860 and 1870, this time by Frenchmen. The last foundation was through Chileans, commencing in 1888, but only reaching its full expression from 1966 onwards.

In discussing those foundations, I do not regard them as singular, but processural. That is, that the ancient foundation of Rapanui order may have taken some decades, even centuries, to produce the outline communicated by Rapanui to outsiders who asked them in the late 19th century. The foundation from France came in the form of missionary priests and lay commercial exploiters, from 1863, until France abandoned the place to Chilean influence in 1888.

The foundation of the Chilean order took much longer to unfold and is the main focus of this paper.

Missionaries and sheep

After the slave or labor raids, Rapanui were reeling from the impact of the loss of personnel and the arrival of disease. As most of the oral tradition surviving (e.g. Métraux 1940; Englert 1980) regales with feuds and death, one can imagine that the demise or departure of one's enemies would not have been without some satisfaction. On the other hand, there was the loss of dear ones . . .

Lay Brother Eugene Eyraud convinced the Sacred Hearts (Picpus) missionary fathers that he should be allowed to lead a mission to Rapanui at the beginning of 1864, he took with him six (four men, a woman and a child) survivors of the slave raids and Daniel, a Mangarevan assistant. Seeing the ferocity of the Rapanui upon landing, and the rapid departure of the returning Rapanui, the Mangarevan refused to land, leaving Eyraud on his own for ten months, until rescued.

During his stay, Eyraud reports a lively, still contesting time on Rapanui. He is befriended and then enslaved by a warrior chief, Torometi, who takes him around with him.

When the next load of missionaries appear, eighteen months have passed and more Rapanui have died. Between continued fighting and the weakness from disease, the place is without crops and people are scavenging for what they can find. The missionaries, now seven, including Eyraud and three Mangarevans, who do remain, come with better stocks and are a more formidable force, especially the strongwilled Roussel, who makes himself the leader of the mission by force of his personality.

Still two years after that, a former Crimean War captain, now down on his luck, Jean-Baptiste Onésime Dutrou-Bornier, makes his appearance, apparently as the local representative of the partnership Brander, Salmon and the Catholic Church, for the commercial exploitation of the island and its people.

Another two years saw the death of Eyraud, the withdrawal of two of the missionaries from activity, and conflict developing between Dutrou-Bornier and Roussel. There were several reasons why these two men might disagree. Firstly, Dutrou-Bornier was never reported to have been particularly pious. There were several in France, especially after the turbulent events of the late 18th century, who were anti-Church. Moreover, in spite of the Bishop of Tahiti's apparent good relations with the well connected Brander-Salmon families, missionaries and commercial developers rarely saw eye to eye on native matters. Finally, and of no small importance, the two Europeans had as their principal Rapanui sponsors two men who were stem rivals.

Torometi, tormentor of Eyraud, had aligned himself with the more permissive Dutrou-Bornier, whilst the rival Roma, who had defeated and routed Torometi from Hangaroa during Eyraud's first stay, was close with Roussel. Both European and Rapanui reasons were involved in the conflict that proceeded.

Meanwhile, both missionary and businessman had started to establish the outlines of the new order. Firstly, a few of the Rapanui places with good anchorage, Anakena, Vaihu and, especially, Hangaroa, became the main settlement sites. With Dutrou-Bornier at nearby Mataveri and Roussel at Hangaroa proper, the little settlement was becoming the defacto colonial capital. The other aging missionary, Father Gaspard, maintained his house at Vaihu and kept pretty much out of the conflict, although he seemed to be friends with Dutrou-Bornier, as the latter visited him with food when he was ill.

Anakena remained without European resident, and the missionaries suspected "pagan rituals" there. They were right.

Dutrou-Bornier, at his significant site of Mataveri, the traditional gathering place of the general populace prior to the annual spring festival, the 'Orongo, probably followed Torometi's suggestions as to where to build his house. The foundation stones of Dutrou-Bornier's ranch headquarters were huge *paenga*, the large base stones most likely from a chief's house. Dutrou-Bornier did not discourage Rapanui custom, as did the missionaries, a position from which he no doubt benefited.

When the conflict came to a head between God and

Mammon, it was on advice from Papeete that Roussel withdrew to Mangareva, taking with him 168 faithful souls, to work in the Church plantations there. Dutrou-Bornier arranged for 247 of the remaining Rapanui to go to Tahiti, where they were employed in the Church plantations at Mahina. Throughout the 1870s, there was a slow drift of Rapanui to Tahiti.

Meanwhile, Dutrou-Bornier was left to his island and he made plans for the ranching operation that had been the reason for his coming to Rapanui in the first place. At the end of 1869, the missionaries had imported 200 sheep, 5 cows, 2 bulls, a horse, 4 pigs, 6 donkeys, 4 dogs and 3 cats: a veritable "Noah's Ark," as Zumbohm remarked (*Annales* 1880:777). This basic farm population was supplemented by Dutrou-Bornier, who went to Papeete with 67 more 'immigrants' and, the following month, sailed for Sydney, where he acquired supplies for his kingdom, by which time Rapanui had become. His bill of lading at Sydney was most impressive: 12 tanks, 37 bundle bags, 100 boxes of soap, 10,500 bricks, 84 bundles hay, 400 sheep, 8 bags biscuit, 10 tierces beef, and 2 packages hardware and sundries. On 30 December, the day he set sail to return to Rapanui direct, he took on board additional cargo: two cases firearms, which suggests that he was prepared to defend his realm!

Both Roma and Torometi turn up in records in Tahiti from the 1870s, as the population had been taken down to the minimum for Dutrou-Bornier to operate his agrarian interests.

One of the accusations that Roussel threw at Dutrou-Bornier was that he stole other men's wives, for himself and his followers. Pua 'Akurenga Koreto was married to Te Hata Tini (5), until the Frenchman became enamored with her. At around the time Dutrou-Bornier was founding his empire, he founded a family, *his* third (one each in France and Tahiti) producing in a short time two daughters, which, on one (in 1875) occasion, he took with him to Tahiti.

With the town commencing, Dutrou-Bornier as a kind of governor, even, one might say, French Government representative, for that's what he tried to be, Koreto by 1875 is a "Queen," her two daughters princesses (Lopez 1876). The French flag flew at Mataveri, the official residence, where most of the population dwelt (Loti 1988). Queen Koreto and Mr. Dutrou-Bornier petitioned the French government for a protectorate.

Arising out of a dispute over faults in a dress made for Koreto, Dutrou-Bornier was killed in August 1876, the one year when there did not seem to have been any ships either coming from Rapanui or going to it (McCall 1990:206-7). The Rapanui told a French visitor, Alphonse Pinart (1878) that the French regent had fallen from his horse whilst drunk, and died. By the end of 1877, the trade in sheep starts again, and the regular ships resume every few months or so.

Father Roussel, who has been in Mangareva tending a diminishing flock, arrives in June 1878 and organizes Rapanui society, noting that the resident ranch manager, a Chilean called 'Chaves' seems fearful (perhaps respectful?) of the Rapanui. Roussel finds a chief, Mati, who is a believer and friend; Peteriko and Paoa, the latter eventually marrying Dutrou-Bornier's younger daughter, are put in charge of the mission's animals, mainly sheep, whilst Dominiko is made

catechist. Roussel returns the following year to baptize and check up on things, by which time the somewhat less than pious Salmon family offspring, Paea, is in charge. With good 19th century French racism, Roussel explains that as the man is descended from an English Jewish family, he hardly could be expected to understand or respect Christian ways!

Sometime in 1881, a delegation of Rapanui travel to Papeete to request a French protectorate and a Gendarme, but nothing ever comes as the French order slowly forms around Rapanui life. There are births on the island, with the above-mentioned baptisms, and Paea is an easy going Governor/Manager, paying his staff in animals and organizing the shipment of Rapanui carvings for trade goods. When visitors arrive, such as Geiseler (1883) in 1882, they are alarmed to find that the Islanders know accurately currency exchange rates and display their curios for sale with price tags, on shelves!

Roussel's 1883 visit saw 167 people on Rapanui, and featured 15 marriages and about 20 baptisms. Roussel (1883) wrote that the Rapanui themselves asked him to replace the former 'pagan government' with a Catholic one. He names Atamu Tekena as chief, two counselors, and 2 judges. A census taken in 1886, in the Church Archives on Rapanui, shows a Tahitian (if not French!) style social order, with the titles of office being in Tahitian, along with the Church materials. The missionaries who visited were French, mostly from Tahiti, but also from the Chilean house of the Sacred Hearts mission, in Valparaíso.

The census, prepared no doubt by Paea in preparation for the eventual sale of the property (which they never bought, of course!) to the Chileans, served another purpose. It established surnames that exist today on the island (See McCall 1986; Hotus et al 1988). The document, bound in a quarto notebook, along with other church documentation, is called "Te Ingoa" and is signed by "Ari'i Paea." 157 persons are listed in the census, perhaps the same one examined by Paymaster Thomson (1889:461), although his published figures do not match with those in the document. The census lists, first, those holding offices and this follows the structure organized by Roussel a decade before. Then, are listed first men, then women, boys and girls. For each person, there is their *Ingoa etene*, pagan name, and *Ingoa papetito*, their baptismal one. The former became a surname, whilst the latter remained their proper name. Subsequent Chilean authorities altered some of the surnames in recording civil records in the twentieth century, but essentially it was from this list that contemporary surnames derive, when they came to be used at all in the course of the present century.

Rapanui, for some purposes, particularly the sharing of land and labor, regard these surname groups as functionally equivalent to the corporate kin groups of their past. A comparative list of these surnames, from 1973 and 1986, is in Table 1.

In a story that must be told elsewhere, the French interest in Rapanui never became official and much to the delight of the Chilean government, they were allowed by France to take over their colony and proof of international standing. They became the only South American country to have an inhabited overseas colony, today still a point of pride for Chileans.

Rapanui was refounded in the 1870s and 1880s, the society was given a new orientation, building upon the first years of European residence in the 1860s. Residence came to be almost exclusively at Hangaroa-Mataverí and Vaihu. The surname groups were established and the administrative life of the place was fixed for the next decade or so. There was an Islander hierarchy, dependent upon the main resident outsider, for many years the company manager. Through this single source would come the civil goods of the society, law and order, cash money and artifact sales. On the other side there was a church hierarchy in the 1880s, in the hands of Angata and Dominiko, the latter who married the former's daughter by her first marriage. Through the Church came a certain amount of charity and the ideological order of the Island, though traditional beliefs were still strong in those days. This refoundation mixed outsider structures, negotiated in the day-to-day of life on the Island, with Polynesian ones.

Chile takes charge, for a while

After a couple of years of negotiations, between the brothers Pedro Pablo and Policarpo Toro, the commercial interests in Tahiti and on Rapanui. French and Chilean governments and the missionaries, both in Tahiti and Chile, the official ceremony of cession and accession took place on Rapanui, complete with papers in Spanish and heavily Tahitianised "Rapanui." (7)

What did the Rapanui understand about what was happening with this ceremony? They knew about protectorates, for word of what Koreto and Dutrou-Bornier were petitioning in the 1870s must have gotten around the small community. As well, there was that group of Rapanui who went to Tahiti in 1881 to ask for a French protectorate. The concept of a protectorate is what the Rapanui were seeking and what they probably thought they were getting. No doubt Paea Salmon and Atamu Tekena had spoken about these arrangements and the concept of Protectorate was clear. Missionary visitors prior to the transfer had taken some time to discuss the impending transfer, they said.

But, as most adult Rapanui know, Atamu Tekena did not rely upon the written word alone. Standing at the ceremony in front of Toro, Tekena picked up a handful of grass and handed it to the Chilean Captain, saying, 'This is for your animals'. He then bent down and scooped up a handful of earth and purposefully thrust it into his trouser/coat pocket, saying, 'this remains with us.' There can be little doubt what the gesture meant in terms of land ownership, *†* think. The Rapanui (Hotus et al 1988) demand that there has never been a sale of land, in spite of curious documents, all signed with "X" held by some institutions. Official Chilean government reports hold the same view (Vergara 1939).

In terms of sovereignty, aside from the hoisting of the Chilean flag (remember, French and English flags had been hoisted before when it was convenient to please a foreign visitor), there was no attempt to tell Atamu Tekena that he was no longer king, and that the Catholic Government of Roussel still was not in place. Indeed, the Spanish version of the documents makes it clear that the chiefs signing keep their titles and benefits.

Moreover, Pedro Pablo Toro's designation was "Agent of

Table 1: Rapanui Demography; 1 May 1986

RAPANUI				OUTSIDER SPOUSES			
Hua'ai	On	On	Total	On	On	Total	Total in
(Family name)	Island	Hiva	Rapanui	Lives	Hiva	Spouses	Hua'ai
Araki	75	34	109	13	6	19	128
Atan	83	69	152	10	17	27	179
Calderon	12	1	13	0	1	1	14
Cardinali	12	6	18	1	2	3	21
Chavez (Teave)	36	40	76	3	7	10	86
Edmunds Hei	6	0	6	1	0	1	7
Edmunds Rapahango	15	27	42	2	10	12	54
Fati	5	1	6	1	0	1	7
Haoa	68	17	85	3	5	8	93
Hereveri	44	17	61	5	0	5	66
Hei or Hey	65	27	92	11	6	17	109
Hito	23	4	27	0	0	0	27
Hotu	35	29	64	2	6	8	72
Huki	42	36	78	6	8	14	92
Ika	102	58	160	13	13	26	186
Manutomatoma (Niares)	24	4	28	5	2	7	35
Nahoe	19	13	32	3	3	6	38
Rangitopa	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Pakarati	117	94	211	11	22	33	244
Pakomio	45	59	104	5	10	15	119
Paoa	85	48	133	8	5	13	146
Pate (Avaka)	109	24	133	5	2	7	140
Pont	48	22	70	2	1	3	73
Pua	2	1	3	1	0	1	4
Raharoa (Terongo)	9	11	20	2	2	4	24
Rapahango	5	0	5	1	0	1	6
Rapu	64	37	101	10	9	19	120
Riroroko	94	46	140	9	13	22	162
Roe	14	3	17	0	2	2	19
Teao	84	31	115	10	6	16	131
Tepano	112	51	163	11	11	22	185
Tepihi	12	10	22	1	3	4	26
Tuki	249	108	357	20	17	37	394
1986 Totals	1,717	928	2,645	175	189	364	3,009
1973 Totals	1,260	447	1,716	56	51	107	1,820

Colonization," not even "Governor" and he negotiated with Atamu Tekena throughout his time on Rapanui. The Rapanui probably were unaware that they had become a part of Chile, though they hoped that Chile would look after them, which is what happened for the next four years.

The colonization did not go well and colonists either died or left. Expenditure overcame income and, in 1892, the Toro brothers' boat foundered on rocks whilst at Rapanui. With that sank the hopes of the brothers Toro to have their agrarian empire in the Pacific.

Toro's (1892) bitter *Memoria* for the Chilean government complains that his previous communications and petitions for assistance to official sources had not been answered and that he is out of money, the colony a failure.

Toro's disaster gave the French-Tahitian order a few more years of life. In August of 1892, when the Rapanui, some observers said, still prepared their 'Orongo ceremony, Atamu Tekena died, a new king had to be found. There was some disagreement amongst the small community of just over two hundred people. Some favored Enrique Ika, who was in a more direct line of descent from the last traditional king, little Gregorio, who had died during those sick years of the 1860s, and feeling ran strong.

However, the Catechist, Angata, organized the women to promote the candidacy of young Simeon Riro, son of Ngure and first cousin to Angata. In Rapanui terminology, they would be siblings. Ngure, Roussel noted his diary, was a follower of Torometi and, therefore, one of Dutrou-Bornier's band. According to a sparse list of baptisms of Rapanui, held in the Catholic Mission in Tahiti, Timeone Riro Kainga was baptized 9 March 1879. Assuming he was only a few years old at the time, he could have been anything from 17 to 21 when he was elected king.

The Chilean Naval Commander Castillo (1892) on the *Abtao*, observed the excitement surrounding the elections and reported that Riro was voted in by the women because he was so good looking. Oral tradition reports that a dissident stole the uniform that Atamu Tekena had worn, so that Riro would not have it. At the same time, as a safeguard, Angata arranged that Riro should marry the adopted daughter of the couple who had returned from Tahiti in 1888 and so they were.

With the departure of Toro and his colonists, Rapanui was left alone, with Riro as king, advised by his councilors, in Catholic government. As well as his baptismal name, Simeon, he was also 'Riro la Kainga,' Riro of the Estate. On his election to kingship, he added to his name 'Roko roko he tau', in memory of little Gregory who had died in the early days of the missionaries, the prince who never became king. It was because of this that he (and his family's surname after him) came to be 'Riro roko.'

There are no ships that are known to have called at Rapanui between 1892 and 1896, so life during this period must have been the quietest, perhaps even the most traditional that had been the case for over thirty years. There are no incidents of violence known either in the literature or in oral tradition, either from outsiders, or amongst the Rapanui.

And, there would be little reason for Riro or any other Rapanui to believe that the circumstances of their lives had been altered; that Chile was doing anything more than benignly keeping a distant eye on their distant protectorate, their 'orphan,' as some Chilean popular sources have described Rapanui.

But, that was to change from 1896 onwards, for during five years, the first pieces of the third refoundation, the Chilean one, would be put brutally into place. This was the beginning of a process of Chileanization that was to culminate in the island finally becoming a full part of Chile in 1966.

But, first: the person who was instrumental in arranging that now so familiar framework for life on the Island was Alberto Sánchez Manterola, who more than two decades after his residence on the Island, left a typescript describing his deeds to his descendants and now, to us (Sánchez 1921). (8)

The beginning of Chileanization

Alberto Sánchez was an almost honorable man. When he observed his employer trying to defraud insurance, he reacted with indignation. When he saw his employer conspire to murder King Riro, who had been so courteous and received him so well, he did nothing.

Sánchez was a man of his times and probably could not take seriously the fact that Rapanui, a colony of Chile, did not have familiar Chilean institutions. Prior to coming to Rapanui, the Chilean government had created the post of "Maritime Sub delegate of Easter Island" and he had been named as the first to occupy that post (Vázquez de Acuña 1987:163). He probably did not know that Riro was descended from the Miru, the senior Rapanui clan or that he had been elected by popular suffrage. He did know that natives can only pretend to have kings, but proper people really have "Caciques." That is, they had native leaders who were appointed and supported by the national government. The Chilean state follows the French one, with a system of central government representation to local populations, always appointed and always loyal to the center.

Riro's major fault was that he was a royal king, not, as Sánchez would have him, a republican Cacique, but that, soon, would be fixed.

The details of Sánchez Manterola's (1921) five years in Easter Island must be taken up elsewhere, (9) the purpose of this summary is to detail his part in the murder of the last King of Rapanui.

When Sánchez arrived in March 1896, he reported that the 214 people were keen to get manufactured goods and he received a very warm and courteous welcome. Riro visited Sánchez and made him feel welcome. Sánchez took on 'about 50' paid employees which was a sizable part of the adult population. King and Sub-Delegate relations seemed cordial and respectful.

In 1897, Enrique Merlet, a rather dark figure of a businessman, who believed he owned Easter Island, sent three armed guards to Rapanui, including one whom he wished to replace Sánchez. The Chilean contingent demanded that the "Canaca" flag be taken down and that only the Chilean flag be flown. The Islanders acquiesced, their first indication, perhaps, of the restrictions of Chileanization to come.

For New Years Day 1898, Riro put on an island-wide party for Sánchez which is a huge success and things go well for the rest of the year, but the end sees a dispute arise over wages and conditions for those in the employ of what has become now "the company." In the course of discussions, Sánchez throws Riro and his delegation out of his office. There follows a strike by the Rapanui who say that they will wait until a Chilean naval ship can come to sort out the dispute. Sánchez, impatient and convinced that Riro has gone too far, goes with a couple of his armed guards to Hangaroa, there to be confronted by Rapanui, who disarm one of the more belligerent guards. The Rapanui insisted on their right of arbitration, countering outsider force with outsider justice.

There were several matters to be taken up. Merlet, through Sánchez and the armed guards, had declared that all animals on the island belonged to the company and had confiscated them. Fences that had been build earlier to keep livestock out of Rapanui agricultural plots became a frontier over which the Islanders should not pass, as they were confined to only 1000 hectares of their island. Hotus (et al 1988:297) cites evidence that the Islanders were tricked into building the enclosure that eventually deprived them of the freedom to visit their own ancestral lands.

The autocratic rule, threat of violence, prohibition of Rapanui symbols (i.e., the flag), loss of animals and lands and, the restriction to one part of the island were the outlines of the new Chilean order that were becoming evident. Also, part of the package, was the appeal to the authority of visiting Chilean Naval captains, the success of which was never certain.

Merlet regarded Riro as a ridiculous impostor and wrote a strong letter to him, telling him to stop his "king nonsense." Riro applies for permission from Sánchez to travel on a Merlet company ship to Valparaiso, believing that he is going to speak to the President of Chile. In Valparaiso, he is met by Jeffries, in the employ of Merlet, but known and presumably trusted by Riro. According to Sánchez, Jeffries got Riro drunk and takes him to "suspicious places," until he falls ill and dies. Oral tradition says that Merlet had Riro poisoned (Hotus et al 1988:302-3).

Riro was accompanied on his fatal mission by Juan Tepano, Juan Araki (the son of Dutrou-Bornier's oldest daughter) and José Pirivato. Tepano and Riro regarded themselves as kin, as have their descendants. They were told by Merlet's men that the king was dead. It is not clear how it came about, but Juan Tepano returned to Rapanui in 1900 as Cacique, in Merlet's employ, and Juan Araki found a position for life with the Company. Merlet arrived to visit his empire for the first time in the same year and contemptuously set fire to the Rapanui fields. There was some resistance to the king's death and subsequent outrages, but it is put down by Sánchez and his armed men. In the same year, an even more determined Englishman, Horace Cooper, arrives and Sánchez leaves, with his conscience.

Cooper's measures are even more stringent. In a letter (10) dated "Talcahuano, 24 September 1902" B. Rojas, commander of *La Baquedano*, the annual Chilean warship, refers to two letters from Cooper, accusing certain Rapanui of insurrection. Six names, including that of Pirivato, were given

as deportees, to be taken to Valparaiso and left to their own devices. Nothing more is heard from these persons, nor is there evidence that they actually were disembarked in Chile. I was told that they were dumped at sea. When Rojas takes the deportees, at the same time he leaves arms and bullets with Cooper, to continue to reinforce his rule. An official Naval visit of 1903 declares that all is quiet, due to the measures taken on the previous visit, i.e. the deportations of trouble-makers (Cuevas 1903).

All, indeed, is quiet, until there is a short millenarian revolt (McCall 1992) led by Riro's cousin, Angata, who had shifted from being a fiery catechist to an inspiring prophetess. (11) Angata's revolt was couched in magico-religious terms which, whilst appealing to a new generation of Rapanui who had grown up since the assassination of Riro, achieved the opposite of her intention. Rather than bring a kingdom of God, or a world based on Rapanui understandings, to her island, she succeeded in provoking the Chilean government into appointing a separate (from the Company manager) Chilean official to represent the state, thus commencing the steady increase in the number of non-Islanders, i.e., Chileans, on the Island and their consequent influence (ibid. 1977:243).

Between the wars

The Merlet enterprise evolves into an English company and the dual relationship of company manager and Chilean resident officials becomes established, with the annual Naval visit as a counterforce of sorts for appeal (see Vergara 1939; Porteous 1981). There are strikes over wages throughout much of this century, but there is no reported (in any source, oral or written) attempt to challenge the political order of Chile.

In 1953, control becomes even tighter and there is a return to a single authority, as the foreign company is turned over to the Navy. Military rule, with punishments such as lashings and head shaving for minor infractions become also a part of Rapanui life. It is very much at a long distance that the Rapanui learn of Chile, for by mid-century, the Islanders are forbidden to leave their land. A newspaper story of the time (Valenzuela Davila 1953) reveals some of the attitudes prevalent, even amongst Chileans sympathetic to the island and its (by now) nearly thousand population.

Dr. Valenzuela, who visited Rapanui for one year to serve as physician, approves of tough treatment, including the lash, for misbehaving Islanders. He noted that the Islanders did not seem to be imbibing the benefits of Chilean civilization and, instead, dreamed of traveling to Tahiti. He (Valenzuela Davila 1953:15) suggested as a way of dealing with this that Rapanui should be removed from their Island and given land in the north of Chile to work.

On 9 May 1947, a group of concerned Chileans formed a group they called 'The Friends of Easter Island (Los Amigos de Isla de Pascua)' which in one form or another continues to this day. Their 1957 *Annual Report* (Amigos 1957:3-4) claims that the main purpose of the group was to organize medical aid to combat leprosy on the Island. Another function becomes more important around this time and that is looking after the few Islanders, as students or adults, who do manage to get to the Mainland (Amigos 1957:5). The *Report* sternly

remarked, though, that such travel and overseas residence does the Islanders no good and it should not be encouraged.

An opening in the *pirca*

Pirca is the Chilean word used for stone wall that one finds in so many parts of the island. At one time, the legitimate bounds of the Rapanui world were defined by such *pirca* and no Islander could venture outside that enclosure without permission even, as one critical writer put it, a sort of passport (Mazière 1969 [1965]).

Five years before *Los Amigos* was formed, Elias Rapu and Reina Haoa had their first live birth, Alfonso, also known as "Israel." When he was 15 years old, in 1957, he was selected as being sufficiently promising that he was sent to Chile, where he was fostered by a kindly, liberal family, to follow his studies, eventually, as a school teacher.

At least one of the curious contrasts between the stories of Riro and Rapu is that there are some details lacking in my account for both of them. For Riro, it is because the events were so long ago, whilst for Rapu, it is because they are so recent. Rapu is alive still and entitled to his secrets.

Rapu was not in the first group of Rapanui children allowed to leave the Island for further study, as that had been in 1956, perhaps coming from Thor Heyerdahl's (1958) sympathetic representations that Chilean colonialism had room for improvement, as well as forces inside Chile. One of the plans of the *Amigos* was to have Chilean families each take on a Rapanui one, to assist them, and to some extent that happened with the early school children. Many older Rapanui have very warm memories of their *apoderados* ("sponsors"), often saying they feel sometimes closer to the Chileans who looked after them in adolescence than the parents who cared and prepared them for that unique *rite de passage*.

Alfonso Rapu received his teaching diploma and returned to his Rapanui to do good. Islanders are as attracted to him for his new ideas as are the local Chilean Naval officials repelled and threatened by him. In 1964, Rapu urged community improvement and captured the imagination of his fellow Islanders. The incumbent Rapanui Mayor (the Cacique had been replaced with an appointed, then elected, Mayor some time before) was told by heads of families to step down and that Rapu would take over his office.

The reigning Chilean Delegate, Captain Guillermo Rojas, was affronted that he had not been consulted by the Rapanui and rejected the proposal. From Rojas's point of view, Rapanui officials held office only at the pleasure of the Naval chief of the Island. He did not like the young Rapu, and accused him of being a "communist," a separatist and probably several other derelictions.

By that time, late 1964, a large Canadian Medical Expedition to Easter Island (METEI) had installed its more than one hundred persons on the island and were filming, including the photogenic Rapu (Reid 1965:45-57). Under the eyes of the media, as it were, a second election took place and Rapu was elected again, some Chileans remarking, sourly as with Riro before, that women had been swayed by the winning candidate's good looks. Shades of Riro! Rojas was not pleased. A small strike took place and the Naval Governor cabled Chile that Rapanui was in revolt!

Within a short time, with headlines screaming, a contingent of Marines had been dispatched to Rapanui and Rapu was taken into custody, under guard. The two score or so marines landed and marched up the road to the church, to be confronted by a crowd of hundreds of women, advancing gaily, but with determination, towards them. The marines retreated to the Governor's now besieged headquarters and Rapu escaped, some say, dressed as a woman, with clothes smuggled to him by a relative.

Canadians filming, Naval Captain fuming and the Marines wondering what to do next, by early 1965, Rapu came out of hiding and resumed his elected position, a hero. He was to have been taken to Chile, like Riro, and the Islanders feared that he would have met the same fate as their last freely elected ruler.

The international attention that the "revolt" brought, shamed Chile, one version of the story goes, and on 22 February 1966, Chilean President Eduardo Frei signed Law 16,441, the "Easter Island Law," which created the Departamento de Isla de Pascua, as part of Valparaiso (Vázquez de Acuña 1987:183-8). A few months later, in June, the Rapanui become full citizens of Chile and their island is no longer a military colony.

On a larger scale, at least part of the 1966 change in legal status was due to the coming of a secret USA military base on the Island in that year, whose operations were part of the surveillance by that country of its arch rival, the (then) USSR. Maybe those plans, part of larger defense arrangements between Chile and the USA, were lurking in the background, favoring the island's move to civilian status and increased contact?

Just as Riro's assassination brought about an irretrievably altered Rapanui in the early part of this century, Rapu's triumph in 1965 placed the island on a path of increased Chileanization, the course of which is underway still.

Some discussion

The basic argument is that both Riro and Alfonso learned from their times, Riro from the French missionary concept of "the Catholic monarchy" and Rapu from his time in training as a Chilean school teacher.

Riro, with no evidence that he ever left the island, until his death, had an imperfect command of outsider ways and perished because of that. He believed his antagonist, Enrique Merlet; moreover, he trusted in the integrity of Alberto Sánchez, whom he had welcomed with European decorum and looked after. There was the strong commercial rush and, basically, no one watching internationally when Riro met his demise.

With Rapu, he had seen Chileans in Chile and lived amongst them, becoming a teacher, intimately involved in a core institution of their state, education. His sources into Chilean society were strong. And, by the time of his return to Rapanui to take up his teacher role, the island was better known to the world and, even, frequently visited in the 1960s, although irksome movement restrictions applied still. There was no direct commercial interest in the place by 1964 and there was someone watching: a contingent of Canadian researchers, who even filmed the events, as I mentioned.

The same offer was made to Rapu as it was to Riro: go to Chile and sort out the local island problems, but the modern day hero refused, knowing what might result. People sang Rapu the song of Riro as a reminder of former treachery.

Riro created his colonial space using his French missionary "Catholic Monarchy" model, although he had been elected. His reference point was far away, in Tahiti, and not in the minds of his adversaries.

In contrast, Rapu knew intimately his opponents, could speak well with them and had a certain status due to his education. In Weberian terms, Riro was a traditional leader, but out of his tradition, while Rapu was a rational-legal one, solidly within a traditional Chileanized context.

Riro's role was to maintain the integrity of Rapanui and their practices. Shortly after his election, there had been a period of four years when no ships are recorded to have stopped there: he was on his own. His script was a totally different one and had Riro remained on his island, he would have not perished. Once removed from his colonial space, the King had no protection and was poisoned by his antagonists. Royalty was replaced by republic, in the form of the Cacique, loyal to the center. Rapu, on the other hand, was working in colonial space, but using the rhetoric, the tools of his opponents: the ballot box, the political meeting and, with the Canadians, was an advanced manipulator of the media. He sought to change a military situation to a civil one and that was his only military act.

Efforts to discredit Rapu usually center upon his alleged foreign ties, particularly French ones. The Naval Governor of the day, Rojas, linked Rapu with the French adventurer, Francis Mazière (1969). This accusation seeks to distract from Rapu's essentially Chilean political action, with which he effectively won the day. Rapu had no experience in France or knowledge of French ideology, except in so far as those attitudes formed part of the Chilean republican ethos.

What Rapu introduced was a greater Chileanization, eventually leading to the civil status of the island in 1966, a brief flirtation as an American military colony and eventual integration into the Chilean state, accomplished not so much through the growth in the governor's office, but through the increasing bureaucratization of the Rapanui controlled municipality.

It was the military (Air Force) trained brother-in-law, Samuel Cardinali, who as appointed Mayor of Rapanui in the 1980s, brought in the present bureaucratic order. His design of the town hall as a series of small offices was an architectural symbol of his organizational intent.

Throughout Rapanui's relations with Chile, there has been a dialogical relationship between defiance and deference, carefully measured by the subject population. Chilean action has provoked Rapanui reaction and Rapanui reaction has summoned up Chilean reaction.

Defiance to be successful for the Rapanui must be couched in Chilean terms, appeal to Chilean sensibilities and follow Chilean social forms. The taking of the LAN-Chile aircraft a few years ago was an example of successful defiance, as have been the occasional strikes for higher wages in the past. The most recent defiance was in November 1992 when a project to place a lighthouse on one of the island's

Table 2: Rapanui By Residence Outside Chile (1986)

Country of Residence	Rapanui Born	Outsider Spouses	Their Children	Total
Argentina	11	2	4	17
Australia	1	1	0	2
Brazil	2	1	1	4
Canada	1	0	0	1
England	2	0	4	6
France	11	9	7	27
Germany	8	7	8	23
Italy	2	1	2	5
New Zealand	1	1	0	2
Spain	3	2	4	9
Sweden	2	2	2	6
Switzerland	2	2	3	7
Tahiti	82	7	34	123
USA	27	5	8	40
Venezuela	1	1	3	5
Sub-Totals	156	41	80	277
Continental Chile	692	148	See Note	840
Total Off Rapanui	928	189	See Note	1117
Total On Rapanui	1717	175	See Note	1892
1986 Totals	2645	364	See Note	3009

NB. In the top part of this table, the offspring of Rapanui and non-Rapanui marriages are separated. In the last four rows, these children are included in the "Rapanui" total, which is both their legal and customary status.

extinct volcanoes was halted successfully, through street marches and marshaling the sympathetic mainland press.

Organized around the surname groups (see Table 1), the Council of Chiefs (Hotus et al 1988) has been both defiant and deferential in its time. Most of the Council's existence has been during the period of the Pinochet dictatorship when public commentary was strictly controlled. The Council managed to get media space to protest against government policy when other forms of protest were not permitted by the dictatorship. The very form of the Council and its *modus operandi* derives from a Chilean based Organization, founded in 1947, called "The Friends of Easter Island" (see above).

Rapanui deference occurs to garner Chilean support. For example, the recent postage stamp dispute between Chile and France was remarkable for the lack of Islander commentary. Rapanui preferred to let the two nation-states, France and Chile, settle the matter and there was no Islander intervention. Deference is often the attitude employed when important government and public figures visit Rapanui. The award by the municipality of Easter Island of its Chilean style honor, "Illustrious son" has gone, variously, to an archaeologist, a police thug and a notorious arms dealer.

Deference extends to the use of Chilean social forms in interpersonal relations, what Goffman (1963; 1983) would

call "cooling the mark," or "tension management."

Easter Island society has gone through several openings and closings since contact with Europeans intensified in 1862. The first opening was the commercial development of the island, which started with the Tahitian-French consortium of Dutrou-Bornier, John Brander and the Catholic Church. This was the beginning of extensive Rapanui traveling and emigration and the beginning of the sheep ranch that was to be such a feature of the island's life until the demise of the last animal in November 1985.

With the coming of the Chile-based Merlet company and the murder of Riro in 1899, the island again was closed. Islander travel was restricted and, after World War 1, the era of desperate small boat voyages commenced, with more than half those hopeful escapees perishing in the attempt (McCall 1977:333-336).

In time, the ranching interests imposed their embargo so as to keep their workers from knowing about wages and prices on what Porteous (1978; also 1981) calls "The Company Island." Officially, though, the reason for the isolation was due to the alleged danger of leprosy.

The first cracks in the opening of the island were in 1956, when the inaugural contingent of school children was allowed further study in Santiago. By the early 1960s, official census figures showed that nearly half of the Rapanui population lived off their island! The full opening of Rapanui took place in 1966, when the island became a civil territory.

Now, that opening is proceeding not only through transport technology, but communications as well. The volunteer radio station was joined by a broadcast television one in 1976. Video tapes from Santiago shortly (in 1994) are being replaced by satellite transmissions. Telephones, now direct dial from the island, shortly will be available from the world directly. The FAX machine has started to make its appearance.

The positive side of this opening up is that Rapanui have available to them more possibilities for development than ever before in their history. About a third of the population now resides off Rapanui, in Chile, Tahiti and in various countries (see Tables 2 and 3).

The negative side is that this opening up has resulted in a redefinition of space and time, and the possibility that Rapanui space may become detached from Rapanui locale through outsider definition.

One of Merlet's primary objectives was to re-define Rapanui time and space; to impose an outsider work regime and definition of property. Time became focused on a mandatory daily routine, encompassed by larger spans in preparation

Table 3: Principal Places of Rapanui Residence (1986)

Usual Residence	Rapanui	%	Outsider Spouses	%	Totals	%
Rapanui	1717	65	175	48	1892	63
Continental Chile	692	26	148	41	840	28
Outside Chile	236	9	41	11	277	9
Totals	2645	100	364	100	3009	100

for company ships, to being trade goods and remove products from the island. Time was determined by Merlet and his successors and the Rapanui were obliged to conform to that new definition, or be cut off from the cash rewards that the company was able to offer.

Imposed by force was the definition of space, in the first instance between the Rapanui and "the company," in whatever form. Islanders were forced to reside in one small corner of their island, deprived, even, of brief visits to their own ancestral territories. During the period of the full Naval rule of the island, from 1953 to 1966, passes were required to venture from Hangaroa, and access to the island strictly controlled.

That definition of Rapanui space continues in the division of the island into various categories of land, some of which is available to the islanders (their residences and agricultural plots) and others are not, such as the national park. The largest land holder on the island continues to be the successor to the company, even occupying part of its premises, SASIPA.

This has contributed to Rapanui being disembedded (Giddens 1990:22-27). Giddens writes:

The advent of modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between 'absent' others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction . . . place becomes increasingly *phantasmagoric*: that is to say, locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them (Giddens 1990:19).

Even the formally undifferentiated Rapanui lands have been subjected to registration since the early 1980s, brought about by the reward of obtaining cheap housing.

Previously opposed in the 1970s, the offer of Chilean government subsidized housing brought about a rush to register Rapanui held residential plots. Today, there are whole parts of the settlement that consist entirely of subsidized ("*subsidio*") housing, people's property defined by formal title rather than kin relation.

The construction of this housing is to have two effects, one short term and the other more in the future. Firstly, the construction of the house used to require Rapanui to mobilize their kin resources, thus incurring mutual debts and obligations. The subsidized housing is produced by government labor and there are no necessary kin obligations incurred. So, not only will the inheritance of land move out of the kin group and into the bureaucratic procedure, but one can predict that the multiple obligations incurred in house construction will not be a feature of future Rapanui life. That is, that Rapanui is moving along the path trod by other societies, replacing relations based on kinship with those based on contract.

The more long term effect is also an unintended consequence and derives from the material, asbestos, used in the construction. Asbestos and the diseases caused by the improper use of this material, have led to severe curtailment of that material's use in the developed world. In Chile, the subsidized housing on Rapanui is largely of sheets of asbestos. The house constructors will certainly suffer from the effects of this dust in the course of construction; if these sheets are not kept properly sealed with paint, the inhabitants will suffer as well. Experience in the developed world with asbestos, where its use largely is banned, suggests that it takes

about thirty years for the disease to develop, a time bomb for the future of Rapanui!

That Rapanui space is becoming detached from Rapanui place, is an inevitable part of the opening of Rapanui society, as it has been in other colonial contexts. The paradox is that those, for very different reasons, who sought to keep Rapanui a closed society, such as the assassinated Riro, and the authoritarian Chilean regime, were the ones responsible for the preservation of its localized cultural forms to the present day. Others, represented for illustrative purposes in this paper by Alfonso Rapu, who sought to open the island have contributed unintentionally to the submersion of its indigenous social forms.

Both Riro and Rapu acted for their own reasons in their own time and space; the consequences that I have suggested above are unintended, but none the less real for it. Without a doubt, the opening of Rapanui society shall lead to the demise of its localized culture, as has happened elsewhere in the colonial world.

But, it will lead also to the development of a new Rapanui world, that people will construct out of the interaction of their daily lives.

As Karl Marx wrote many years ago, "Human beings make their own history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing."

It is through the management of defiance and deference, the action to control and moderate the opportunities for opening and the threats for closing Rapanui society that people on the world's most remote human outpost will shape their own destinies, but usually not in circumstances of their own choosing.

Postscriptum

As I did in the shortened oral presentation of the above at the Rendezvous, I want to end this piece with a reflective confession and a comment.

I mentioned that people often are surprised that I do social anthropology on Rapanui, since most images of the place never show any local people. That was not entirely the image that I had when I went to Rapanui, but one not too distant: my theoretical preparation for understanding Rapanui prior to my fieldwork in 1972 was Gonzalez's concept of the "Neoteric society." That is, a society and culture similar to those in the Caribbean where, recently founded, people carried out their daily lives in a transactional context, building from random elements their systems of being (see Gonzalez 1969). People would be working in the absence of history, their lives being carried out on the basis of personal history, using such concepts as "reputation" (for males) and "respectability" (for females) (see Wilson 1973).

It was the Rapanui who demonstrated to me how in error I was and the depth of their history and knowledge. Whilst most of those cultural specialists from whom I learned so much are now dead, there are many people on the island today whose identity and daily being derive from structures and processes of several centuries.

A corollary to that confession is a comment that derives not from fieldwork amongst the Rapanui, but from having encountered a number of persons who have made it their life's

work to study Easter Island. These people reside on the island, Mainland Chile and in a number of countries around the world. All of us who are not Rapanui and who do not derive our main identity from association with that powerful place must remember that the island does not belong to us, the outsider, the *tangata* (and *vi'e!*) *hiva*. Owing to our privileged position in universities (I include myself) and residing in some of the better padded parts of the world, we may know a lot more about Rapanui than the average Islander; our studies may have taken us to the most esoteric depths of Polynesian knowledge. But, at its basis, Rapanui belongs to the Rapanui and not to us. We the researchers are always the guests of those Islanders and, if we are lucky and behave ourselves, we might be privileged, even, to become their collaborators.

Footnotes

- (1) Research on Rapanui was supported by a Ph.D Scholarship at the Australian National University, The Australian Research Council and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of New South Wales. Field trips to Rapanui from 1972-1974 and, again, from 1985 to 1986, were supplemented by archive research on Mainland Chile and in the archives of the Sacred Hearts in Papeete, Valparaiso and Rome. For the research in Chile, the author is grateful to the Naval Archives of Valparaiso and to the Institute of Easter Island Studies, University of Chile. For the Sacred Hearts archives, especially in Rome, the author owes a considerable debt to R. P. Amerigo Cools.
- (2) The usual quoted surface area of Rapanui is 166 km². However, a more recent figure kindly sent to me by the Director of the Institute of Ecology of Chile, Dr. Juan Grau, gives the surface area as 170.85 km². This calculation is supplied to Dr. Grau by the National Office of Frontiers and State Limits of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- (3) According to Chilean sources, Rapanui is situated at approximately 28 deg 10 min S latitude and 109 deg 30 min W longitude.
- (4) George Gill and his colleagues produced a series of studies of Peruvian elements in Rapanui skeletal remains at a conference about the island held in August 1993. Gill speculates that prior to settling their eventual home, the Marquesan founding figures may have overshot and spent some time in Peru, doubling back to found Rapanui in an attempted return voyage (See Gill, Haoa & Owsley 1993; Chapman 1993).
- (5) Unless otherwise noted, details of Rapanui genealogy are from fieldwork carried out in 1972 to 1974. My main informants on *matamu'a*, the old days, were José Fati Puarary, Luis Paté Paoa, Amelia Tepano Ika, Leon Tuki Hey and Victoria Rapahango Tepuku, all of whom generously gave of their time and knowledge for my work.
- (6) Research in the French Archives d'Outre-mer at Aix-en-Provence to discover such detail is being carried out in late 1993 and early 1994.
- (7) Documents for this Chilean annexation were first published in Vergara (1939), a rather specialist text. When Dr. Stephen Chauvet's (1936) compilation of photographs and history was translated and published in Chile, in various editions from 1945 onwards, a selection of documents about the Chilean status of the island was included in extensive appendices (e.g. Chauvet 1965). Closer to the centenary of the annexation, another collection, supported by justificatory articles, appeared (Vázquez de Acuña et al 1987).
- (8) The typescript is in the archives of the Institute of Easter Island Studies, University of Chile and I am grateful for access to this enlightening document. Parts of it are summarized in Hotus et al (1988).
- (9) *Matamu'a. Conversations and conclusions on Easter Island*, is the

tentative title of the book I intend to complete about history and life on Rapanui. The conversations refer to those that I have had with Islanders over the years, both on the island and elsewhere, as well as those I have had with myself trying to understand the place. These conversations have conclusions.

(10) Archives of the Institute of Easter Island Studies, University of Chile.

(11) See McCall (1992) for a summary and Hotus et al (1988: 303-49) for details of the Naval inquiry about the incident.

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